



THE AD HOC GROUP FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH

Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up

July 20, 2020

Each week, the Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up will feature hashtags and/or tweets (follow us at [@fundNIH](#)) suggested by members of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) advocacy community. We encourage all readers who are active on social media to use these messages, and we welcome suggestions from the community for future issues of the Weekly Round Up. Here is this week's featured tweet:

Association of American Universities @AAUniversities – July 19

Changes in blood platelets triggered by [#COVID19](#) could contribute to the onset of heart attacks, strokes and other serious complications in some patients who have the disease, according to [@UUtah](#) Health scientists:
<https://attheu.utah.edu/facultystaff/covid-19-causes-hyperactivity-in-blood-clotting-cells/>

Senate GOP COVID-19 Relief Bill Expected This Week

Senate Republicans have been drafting the next comprehensive COVID-19 relief bill which is expected to be released the week of July 20. [The New York Times reported on July 19](#) that the draft bill aimed to allocate billions of dollars for testing, contact tracing, and research, including the possibility of \$15 billion for NIH. The White House reportedly pushed back on the draft proposal to provide emergency relief for public health and research agencies during discussions over the weekend. News outlets including [Politico](#) are reporting that meetings between Republican leadership and the White House will take place on July 20 as final details are ironed out on what Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) previously estimated would be a \$1 trillion emergency relief bill.

Director's Blog: Primate Study Shows Promise in Acquired Immunity

NIH Director Francis Collins, MD, PhD, discussed research findings indicating that nonhuman primates display immunity to a repeat SARS-CoV-2 infection in a [July 14 blog post](#). The research study exposed rhesus macaques to SARS-CoV-2 which resulted in the animals developing symptoms similar to human COVID-19 and were then 28 days later re-exposed to SARS-CoV-2. Dr. Collins noted, "after the second SARS-CoV-2 exposure, the four macaques developed a transient fever that had not been seen after their first infection. No other signs of reinfection were observed or detected in chest X-rays, and the animals tested negative for active virus over a two-week period." Dr. Collins added that while this was not a study in humans, "the findings lend hope that COVID-19 patients who develop acquired immunity may be at low risk for reinfection, at least in the short term."

Open Mike: Flexibilities for Animal Care During COVID-19

NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research Michael Lauer, MD, shared recent updates on NIH flexibilities related to the use of animals in research in a [July 20 Open Mike blog post](#). Highlights include temporary waivers to semiannual Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) inspections, the ability for IACUCs to conduct business virtually, the ability for institutions to modify business processes and re-evaluate and improve disaster plans.

Chasing Cancer: A Conversation with Dr. Ned Sharpless

National Cancer Institute (NCI) Director Ned Sharpless, MD, discussed the impacts of COVID-19 on the cancer community during a [July 16 Washington Post Live interview](#). Dr. Sharpless discussed challenges for patients and providers in receiving and delivering care and the importance of research progress. Dr. Sharpless also addressed the financial impacts to hospitals and health care providers as coronavirus has impacted how care is provided for non-emergency procedures, and the importance of resuming certain health care activities to ensure that missed appointments for screening and treatments do not lead to a new public health crisis.

NIDA Director's Blog: NIDA Seeks Feedback on Strategic Plan

National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) Director Nora Volkow, MD, summarized the institute's recently released 2021-2025 strategic plan and called for stakeholder feedback in a [July 14 blog post](#). Dr. Volkow notes that the plan has three main goals: to understand drug use, addiction and the brain; to develop and test novel prevention, treatment, and recovery support strategies; and to implement evidence-based strategies in real-world settings. The goals aim to be accomplished by employing basic science as well as clinical, implementation, and policy research. Additional information is provided in [NIDA's June 29 Request for Information](#). Feedback is due by August 7.

Requests for Public Comment

NIH Requests Comments on Improving Biomedical Research Involving Animal Models – July 31

The NIH posted a [request for information](#) (RFI) “aimed at enhancing rigor, transparency, and translatability to improve biomedical and behavioral research involving animal models,” according to an Open Mike [blog post](#) by NIH deputy director for extramural research Mike Lauer, MD. A [working group](#) of the Advisory Committee to the NIH Director will consider responses to this request as they draft their final report expected in December. Comments should be [submitted online](#) and are due July 31.

NIDDK Seeks Feedback on Strategic Plan – July 31

NIH's National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK) issued a March 16 [request for information](#) on the institute's five-year strategic plan. According to the RFI, “The goal of the process is to develop a broad vision for accelerating research into the causes, prevention, and treatment of diseases and conditions within the Institute's mission,” and focuses on five broad themes for community input. [Comments are due](#) by July 31.

NIDA Seeks Feedback on Strategic Plan – August 7

The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) [issued a Request for Information \(RFI\)](#) seeking feedback on an outline for the NIDA Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2021-2025. NIDA specifically seeks feedback on: the scientific goals and actions articulated in the framework including additional areas of opportunity that should be included in the plan; drawbacks or challenges to accomplishing these goals and actions; cross-cutting research topics and approaches articulated in the framework; and ways to ensure widespread dissemination and implementation of the plan. You may submit your comments via email to: NIDAstrategicPlan@nida.nih.gov.

NINDS Seeks Feedback on Strategic Planning Process

The National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS) is embarking on an institute-wide strategic planning process, and published a [July 2019 request for information](#) on the process. The goal of the process is to tune its practices and policies to its vision and mission, in order to better serve and anticipate the needs of the research and patient communities and the public. The mission of NINDS is to seek fundamental knowledge about the brain and nervous system and to use that knowledge to reduce the burden of neurological disease. Those interested in submitting comments for consideration as NINDS establishes a new strategic plan may still do so [through this form](#).

Upcoming Events

NIH Human Fetal Tissue Ethics Advisory Board Meeting – July 31

The NIH posted a Notice of the first [meeting of the NIH Human Fetal Tissue Research Ethics Advisory Board](#) in the *Federal Register* on July 15. The [virtual meeting](#) will take place on July 31 and will be open to the public from 10-11:05 am. According to the notice, there will be a 20-minute public comment period during the open session and interested parties should notify the meeting contact person at least 4 days in advance to reserve a time slot.

Virtual Rally for Medical Research – Sept. 16-17

The Rally for Medical Research is held every September and includes more than 300 national organizations coming together in support of to call on our nation's policymakers to make funding for National Institutes of Health (NIH) a national priority and raise awareness about the importance of continued investment in medical research that leads to more progress, more hope, and more lives saved. This year's event will be held virtually on September 16-17. For more information and to register, please visit <https://rallyformedicalresearch.org>.

NIH COVID-19 Resources

[NIH COVID-19 resource for applicants and grantees](#) including guidance for various aspects of research and grant application processes, as well as FAQs and COVID-19 funding opportunities.

[COVID-19 "Updates History" webpage](#) that details relevant updates for applicants and grantees by date.

[FAQ document on COVID-19 flexibilities](#) related to policies and programs affecting the grants process.

[Funding opportunities specific to COVID-19](#) lists active and expired funding opportunities across NIH related to SARS-CoV-2/COVID-19 research.

[HHS COVID-19 awards tracking website](#) including data on awards made by all HHS awarding agencies with supplemental appropriations.

Job Postings

ASM Seeks a Regulatory Affairs Specialist

The American Society for Microbiology (ASM)'s Policy and Advocacy Department seeks an experienced Regulatory Affairs Specialist to strengthen its presence with federal agencies, specifically CMS and FDA, and proactively identify opportunities for ASM federal policy engagement on clinical and regulatory matters. This person will monitor, analyze, and report on regulatory activity that has the potential to affect the microbial sciences and clinical microbiology community in assigned policy areas, and work with ASM members and staff to develop position statements, testimony, and regulatory comments. View the full job description and [apply here](#). For more information about ASM, go to: www.asm.org

FASEB Seeks Associate Director for Legislative Affairs

The Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB) seeks an experienced [Associate Director for Legislative Affairs](#) to serve as principal representative of FASEB to members of Congress and congressional staff and advise FASEB leadership and the Board of Directors on legislative strategies and advocacy initiatives related to increasing federal funding for and awareness of life sciences research. This position is responsible for developing and executing a successful appropriations strategy and legislative advocacy program on behalf of FASEB and FASEB member societies and coordinating with other stakeholders in the biomedical research advocacy community. Please see the [attached PDF job description](#) and [click here](#) to submit a cover letter, resume, and a short writing sample. For more information about FASEB, visit www.faseb.org.

Please Note: If you have information of interest to the NIH advocacy community that you would like to share with the Ad Hoc Group, please forward it to Christa Wagner at chwagner@aamc.org or Tannaz Rasouli at trasouli@aamc.org.